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CONTACT: Mark D. Weinstein
Executive Director of Public Relations
[937-766-8800](tel:937-766-8800) (o)
[937-532-6885](tel:937-532-6885) (m)
Mweinstein@cedarville.edu
@cedarvillenews

Private Universities Earn Higher Marks than Publics

CEDARVILLE, OHIO – A growing debate in the media continues to be over the value between public and private higher education. The perception is public education is better because universities are larger, they may cost less, and have larger operating budgets.

But are public universities superior to private institutions?

According to data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics, private colleges and universities are equivalent—or better—than the prestigious public universities. The data from Ohio's 34 private universities proves this point as they significantly outperform public institutions in four-year, minority, low-income, and first-generation graduation rates.

According to the statistics, which was recently released, private colleges post a 51 percent graduation, compared to just 35 percent at public schools. Cedarville University performed even better, with 60.3 percent of students graduating in four years, according to data from the university's registrar's office.

Likewise, 54 percent of minority students graduated from private institutions compared to just 42 percent from public colleges. Cedarville's minority graduation rate matched that of other independent colleges at 54 percent, according to the most recent data available.

First-generation students at private colleges posted a four-year graduation rate of 35 percent, nearly double that of their public school peers (18 percent). Low-income students at private institutions posted a four-year graduation that more than doubled that of public schools, 31 percent to 13 percent.

In addition, graduates from private institutions make an average of \$44,928 in "year five," while the majority of their public school peers are still enrolled in school, adding an extra year to their debt burden.

Recent research by The Chronicle of Higher Education also showed that private schools prepare their graduates for their careers better than public institutions. Presidents at private institutions felt that 78 percent of their graduates were "very well prepared" or "well prepared" for their careers, while public college presidents said that only 68 percent fell into those categories.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,711 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 100 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and leading student satisfaction ratings.